

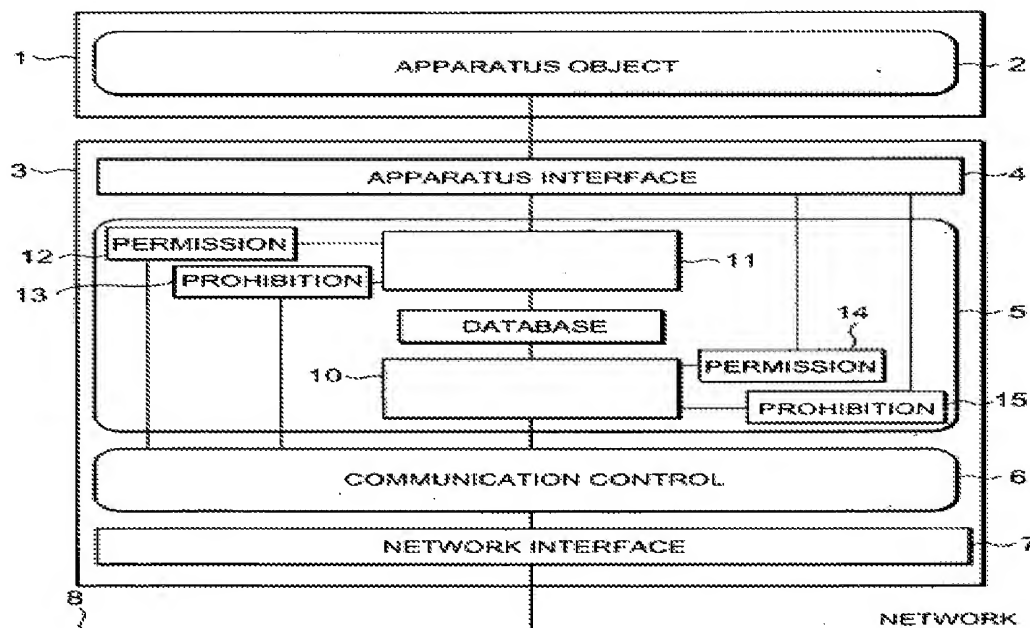
REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-3 and 5-11 remain pending, wherein claims 17-34 are withdrawn and claim 4 previously canceled. By this communication, claims 12-16 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the underlying subject matter and claim 1 is amended. Support for the amended subject matter can be found, for example, at page 31, line 23 through page 35, line 11 and in FIG. 3 of Applicants' disclosure.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-3 and 5-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for alleged unpatentability over *Howard et al.* (US 6728804) in view of *Van der Meulen* (US 6906617) and further in view of *Abdulkarim* (US 2003/0088796). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

An exemplary representation of communication adapter apparatus recited in claim 1 is illustrated in Fig. 3 (reproduced below) of Applicants' disclosure.



As shown in Fig. 3, the communications adapter 3 provides an interface between the apparatus 1 and the network 8. The communications adapter 3 includes an apparatus interface 4, communication managing means 5, communication control 6, and network interface 7. The apparatus interface 4, in turn, includes several features, such as an interface access unit 11 and an apparatus control access unit 10, which control careless operation of the apparatus object 2 from the network 8.

Independent claim 1 broadly encompasses the foregoing features. In particular, claim 1 is directed to a communication apparatus that comprises, among other features, "first access control means that permits or prohibits an access to the apparatus interface access unit from the apparatus object of the connection object apparatus based on an operation of the communication control means; and second access control means that permits or prohibits an access to the apparatus control access unit from the communication control means based on an operation of the apparatus object of the connection object apparatus via the apparatus interface means".

Because of the aforementioned embodiments, even if the connection object apparatus or the communication adapter apparatus is in a state of initialization or maintenance, the setting and the maintenance can be performed safely. In particular, the second access control means permits or prohibits an access to the apparatus control access unit from the communication control means based on an operation of the apparatus object via the apparatus interface means. Thus, the connection object apparatus can prohibit access to the apparatus control access unit from the communication control means. This can occur when it is deemed dangerous for the

apparatus to be operated remotely from the network due to the initializing state, maintenance, or other similar function by operating the second access control means via the apparatus interface means. Therefore, if the potential for detrimental results due to remote operation are possible, careless operation of the apparatus object from the network can be prevented.

Howard fails to disclose or suggest the combination of features recited in claim 1. In particular, there are no components, techniques, or devices in *Howard* that "permits or prohibits an access to the apparatus control access unit from the communication control means based on an operation of the apparatus object of the connection object apparatus via the apparatus interface means", as recited in Applicants' claim 1.

For example, based on the guidance provided by *Howard*, if the state of the electronic device 42 is at risk from a remote operation over the communication network 30 due to an initialization, the electronic device 42 cannot operate the communications adapter 20 to prohibit control by the communication network 30. For at least these reasons, *Howard* does not anticipate Applicants' claims and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Based on at least the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 1-3 and 5-11 are allowable, and this application is in condition for allowance. In the event any issues adverse to patentability remain, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative towards resolving these issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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